CCN Newsletter

County Councils Network

Welcome to the Network's May Newsletter

After the 'cut and thrust' of the Hustings and the announcement of the Local Election results, it is back to normal here at the **CCN**. This month sees a packed Newsletter with details of our presence at the LGA Conference, further details of **CCN** Conference 2012 and news items on the new *Adoption Scorecards*, the CCN Response to the Schools Funding Consultation, the *Priority School Building Programme*, the Government's plans for the reform of the Social Fund and an Update on Social Care.

There are some dates for your diary and of course the usual 'And Finally…….' which this month contributes to celebrations for the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

As always, if you have any feedback on the Newsletter, items that you would like to see included or suggestions about how we can improve the Newsletter, please let us know. Contact kieran.smith@local.gov.uk or 0207 664 3009.

LGA Conference 2012 – Once again **CCN** will be present at the annual Local Government Association Conference and Exhibition, which is being held at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham, from 26-28 June 2012.

We are pleased to announce that the **CCN** will be present throughout LGA Conference and you will be able to find our stand near to the LGA Conference Reception (**Stand R11**).

We look forward to seeing you in Birmingham very soon.

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CCN Executive May 2012 – The **CCN** Executive met on 23 May 2012 and

received a very interesting and useful presentation from the leader of Essex County Council, Peter Martin on the Whole Place Community Budgets Pilot that Essex County Council alongside Cheshire West and Chester Council are currently undertaking. CCN will continue to keep you updated on the progress of these ground-breaking schemes throughout the year.

Dates for Your Diary: CCN Meetings - The next meeting of the **CCN Executive** is 18 July 2012 here at Local Government House. We will include more about this meeting in the next edition of the **CCN** Newsletter. The **CCN AGM** and **Council** is scheduled for Friday 7 September 2012, again here at Local Government House.

CCN Conference 2012 – CCN is pleased to announce that the 2012 Annual CCN Conference will be held at St. George's Park, Burton-On-Trent, Staffordshire.

St. George's Park is the Football Association's new national training centre for the 24 English national sides, boasting state of the art conference and educational facilities making it the perfect venue for the annual **CCN** Conference.

The Conference will run from the evening of **Sunday 18 November to lunchtime on Tuesday 20 November**.

Further details of the **CCN** Conference will be published later on in the Summer, but if you have any further questions at this stage please contact Kieran Smith - Kieran.smith@local.gov.uk or telephone 0207 664 3009.

Social Fund Reforms – The Government has set out its plans for the Reform of the discretionary Social Fund from April 2013. The Fund is currently administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP); however, as a result of changes made by the Welfare Reform Act 2012, local authorities will be responsible for the provision of some elements of this assistance from April 2013.

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Further details of funding and responsibilities for the new locally-based schemes are expected to be published by DWP by the end of June 2012.

CCN has published a briefing describing the background to the changes, plans for the new scheme and funding information currently available. The **CCN** Briefing can be accessed HERE.

Social Care Briefing – The Social Care White Paper, and accompanying "progress report" on talks about the funding of social care, was expected in early Spring 2012. The DH Corporate Plan, updated this month, promised publication by the end of May. These papers have clearly been further delayed and are not expected until June 2012. However it is widely expected that the paper will fail to address the key issues of transformation of social care and a long term funding solution. The Government also indicated that following consultation on the Social Care White Paper it would introduce "legislation in the second session of this parliament to establish a sustainable legal and financial framework for Adult Social Care".

However in the Queen's Speech on 9 May 2012 the Government only set out proposals for a draft Bill to modernise adult care and support in England. The draft Bill, to be published shortly after the White paper, will set out what support people could expect from Government and what action the Government would take to help them to plan, prepare and make informed choices about their care, and provide greater clarity and equity of access to care and support.

CCN is working with the LGA, SCT and County Chief Executives on what some have called **"The Graphs of Doom"** estimating the squeeze on public spending over the next few years, with particular focus on the significant increases expected in demand for (and therefore costs of) social care and the likely impact that this will have on funding for other services in a period of declining central government funding for local government. More on this in future editions!!

CCN's briefing on Social Care – which includes progress (or lack of) with the White Paper and funding, the Queen's Speech and the "Graph(s) of Doom" can be found HERE.

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CCN Response to Consultation on Schools Funding Reform: next steps towards a fairer System

– **CCN** has published its response to the Government's School Funding Consultation. This School Funding Consultation response presents the issues currently facing **CCN** member authorities and the impact that any changes to the funding system will have upon schools in **CCN** member authority areas and upon **CCN** member councils themselves.

The consultation response can be viewed **HERE**.

CCN Beacon: May/June 2012 – CCN has now published the May/June edition of the **CCN** County Beacon 'Serving Rural Communities'.

This can be downloaded now from the **CCN website**.

Adoption Scorecards – Earlier this month, the Government published the first Adoption Scorecards for each upper-tier and unitary council. The scorecards have been widely criticised by the LGA, SOLACE and the ADCS for their lack of contextual data, and inclusion of factors that are outside of local authority control. The three organisations acknowledge that there is variation in performance across the country and have called for greater cooperation with the Government to support sector-led improvement.

In response the **CCN** has prepared a **CCN** Briefing outlining some of the main issues for **CCN** member authorities. This will be published in the near future and will be available on the **CCN Website**.

The Priority School Building Programme – The Government has published the list of schools whose bids for funding for school building refurbishment, repair and where appropriate rebuild were successful. The Priority School Building Programme will see funding being made available to meet the 'condition' needs of schools.

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Overall, a total of 587 schools applied for funding and 261 were successful in this round. Of these 81 projects are from **CCN** Member authorities, with Nottinghamshire and Kent having the largest numbers of projects funded.

In response the **CCN** has prepared a **CCN** Briefing outlining some of the main issues for **CCN** member authorities. This will be published in the near future and will be available on the **CCN** **Website**.

Decentralisation and Open Public Services Update – The **CCN** has published a number of **CCN** Briefings on these major Government policy areas, which can be accessed HERE.

If you have any questions about either of these policy areas, please contact Kieran Smith Kieran.smith@local.gov.uk or telephone 0207 664 3009.

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Some Help Please: The Rural Services Network - The Rural Services Network is undertaking its second survey into the views and experiences of rural people in England.

Last year as part of the Rural Insight Survey it generated over 1,300 responses. You can view the results of this survey at www.ruralinsight.org.uk.

The Rural Services Network would greatly appreciate any assistance in further developing the survey which will provide a really important data source.

Responses will help the Network to both chart the key issues in rural England and consider how the views and experiences of rural people about living and working in the countryside have developed over the last 12 months.

You can access the survey by clicking on this link.

If you would like any information about the survey or have any queries about its questions please contact: Ivan Annibal at: Ivan.Annibal@sparse.gov.uk

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Some Help Please: Local Freedoms for Councils - The LGA has been working with Graham Allen MP, the Chair of the Political and Constitutional Reform Select Committee on the future of the relationship between central and local government.

The LGA would like to hear from **CCN** member councils on how to embed real, lasting local freedoms for local government.

They would also like to hear whether formally acknowledging the relationship, possibly through a code, would allow local authorities in England to clearly demonstrate that they are responding to the needs and wants of their local communities, rather than acting on central government prescriptions.

Please email any thoughts, ideas, or suggestions to indelocalgov@local.gov.uk.

Other Dates for Your Diary

NALC Conferences 2012: People in Action Connecting local councils to communities - NALC are holding three one-day conferences this year, with the aim of showing how local (parish and town) councils can work with communities and people on how the delivery of real action that will improve lives.

When: Thursday 5 July – Bristol City Centre Marriott and Thursday 20 September – Mercure Sheffield St Pauls Hotel and Spa;

Who should attend? Councillors, Clerks, County Association officers, Principal Authority Councillors, Principal Authority Officers, Civil Servants, Think Tank Personnel, Charity and Voluntary sector staff, Private sector staff, and anyone interested in localism and the Big Society;

Why you should attend: The conferences aim to show how local (parish and town) councils can work with communities and people on how the delivery of real action will improve lives. The conferences will also offer a significant exhibition for the sector;

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Programme highlights: Ministers, Case studies from Councils, Councillors and Officers, Academics, NALC officers, Leading elected members of NALC, the Chief Executive of NALC and eight interactive workshops.

How to book: Prices held from 2011! Member Council rate £97.50 + VAT = £117 and Non-member Council rate £145.00 + VAT = £174. Complete and return the booking form to NALC : Thursday 5 July – Bristol Booking Form Thursday 20 September – Sheffield Booking Form

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NALC Larger Councils' Conference 2012: People Shaping Their Places -

NALC is holding a one-day Larger Councils' Conference this year, with the aim of showing how local (parish and town) councils can use the implementation of the Localism Act 2011 to derive benefits for their communities.

When: Wednesday 28 November 2012 - Royal National Hotel, London;

Who should attend: Councillors, Clerks, County Association officers, Principal Authority Councillors, Principal Authority Officers, Civil Servants, Think Tank Personnel, Charity and Voluntary sector staff, Private sector staff, and anyone interested in localism, the Big Society and broader larger council matters;

Why attend: This conference aims to show how local (parish and town) councils can use the implementation of the Localism Act 2011 to derive benefits for their communities. The conference will also offer a significant exhibition for the sector;

Programme highlights: Ministerial Speech On Implementation of the Localism Act 2011; Panel session on the Community Right to Challenge; Training session on the General Power of Competence; Chief Executive of NALC; and Four interactive workshops;

How to book: Prices held from 2011! Member Council rate £180 + VAT = £216 and Non-member Council rate £240 + VAT = £288. This year there is a special Quality Councils' discounted rate of £162 + VAT = £194.40 (must book before 31 July 2012 to qualify for discounted rate.) Complete and return the booking form to NALC.

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And finally.....

With the celebration of Her Majesty the Queen's Golden Jubilee, here are a few interesting facts published by Buckingham Palace about her reign:

1. The Queen is the second longest serving monarch after Queen Victoria who reigned for 63 years;
2. The Queen is the 40th monarch since William the Conqueror obtained the crown of England;
3. Since 1952 the Queen has given royal assent to more than 3,500 Acts of Parliament;
4. Over her reign the monarch has given regular audiences to 12 prime ministers:

   Sir Winston Churchill 1951-55; Sir Anthony Eden 1955-57; Harold Macmillan 1957-63; Sir Alec Douglas-Home 1963-64; Harold Wilson 1964-70 and 1974-76; Edward Heath 1970-74; James Callaghan 1976-79; Margaret Thatcher 1979-90; John Major 1990-97; Tony Blair 1997-2007; Gordon Brown 2007-2010 and David Cameron 2010 – present.
5. The Queen has attended every opening of Parliament except those in 1959 and 1963, when she was expecting the Duke of York and Earl of Wessex respectively;
6. There have been six archbishops of Canterbury during the Queen's reign - Geoffrey Fisher, Michael Ramsey, Donald Coggan, Robert Runcie, George Carey and Rowan Williams;
7. There have been six popes during the reign - Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul I, John Paul II and Benedict XVI;
8. Since 1952 the Queen has conferred more than 404,500 honours and awards;
9. The monarch has answered around three and a half million items of correspondence;
10. The sovereign has sent more than 175,000 telegrams to centenarians in the UK and the Commonwealth;
11. The sovereign has given out approximately 90,000 Christmas puddings to staff, continuing the custom of George V and George VI;
12. During the last 60 years, the Queen has undertaken 261 official overseas visits, including 78 state visits, to 116 different countries;

13. Unusual live gifts given to the monarch on foreign tours include: two tortoises presented in the Seychelles in 1972; a seven-year-old bull elephant called Jumbo from the president of Cameroon in 1972 to mark the Queen's silver wedding anniversary; and two black beavers presented after a visit to Canada;
14. The only time the sovereign has had to interrupt an overseas tour was in 1974 during a visit to Australia and Indonesia when she was called back to the UK from Australia when a general election in the UK was suddenly called. The duke continued with the programme in Australia and the Queen rejoined the tour in Indonesia;
15. The Queen made a historic visit to the Republic of Ireland in May 2011, the first visit by a British monarch since Irish independence;
16. The first football match the Queen attended was the 1953 FA Cup Final;
17. The Queen has laid her wreath at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday every year of her reign, except in 1959, 1961, 1963, 1968, 1983 and 1999 when she was either pregnant or overseas on official visits;
18. The Queen has attended 56 Royal Maundy services in 43 cathedrals during her reign. A total of 6,710 people have received Maundy Money in recognition of their service to the church and their communities;
19. Since it was launched to mark the Queen's golden jubilee in 2002, the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service has been awarded to more than 750 voluntary organisations across all four countries in the UK. Winners of the award have included scout groups, community radio stations, groups who care for the elderly and environmental charities;
20. During the past 60 years almost one and a half million people have attended garden parties at Buckingham Palace or the Palace of Holyrood House. The Queen ended debutante presentation parties in 1958;
21. The monarch's racing colours are a purple body with gold braid, scarlet sleeves and black velvet cap with gold fringe. They were adopted from those used by Edward VII; one of his most successful horses was called Diamond Jubilee; and
22. During the silver jubilee year, the Queen toured 36 counties in the UK and Northern Ireland, starting in Glasgow on May 17. During her golden jubilee year she toured 35 counties beginning in Cornwall on May 1.

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If you wish to know more about anything mentioned in this newsletter, please contact one of the **CCN** team:

Director
Caroline Cunningham 020 7664 3006 caroline.cunningham@local.gov.uk

Deputy Director
Simon Edwards 020 7664 3002 simon.edwards@local.gov.uk

Senior Policy Officer
John Courouble 020 7664 3010 john.courouble@local.gov.uk

Policy Officer
Kieran Smith 0207664 3009 kieran.smith@local.gov.uk

Office Administrator
Lisa Wood 020 7664 3011 lisa.wood@local.gov.uk

Further information about the **CCN** and our work can be found on our website: www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk

Follow **CCN** on Twitter: http://twitter.com/ccnoffice

As always, we welcome feedback on the items included. Which bits did you find interesting? Are there other things you would like us to cover? Please send us your feedback by clicking on this link.